

# *Sacrificial* GIVING

First in a Series of Reports on the Weekly Stewardship Responsibility

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**A**s Christians, we recognize that all we are is entrusted to us by God to be used according to His plan and purpose. When we participate in the Eucharist each week, the gifts that are brought forward and become the sacrifice of the Mass call out for a profound response—that of gratitude. We listen to the Gospel proclaimed and understand the free gift of salvation that is ours through our Baptism. We are invited to align ourselves with the sacrifice of Christ by making an offering of ourselves out of gratitude.

Our need to give flows out of traditional spiritual values: humility, wonder and awe, gratitude and service. All these values are at the heart of the practice of Christian Stewardship. They are conveyed when we celebrate Holy Mass and are free gifts given through the Gospel and Holy Eucharist.

When we truly understand this, what is our natural reaction? One of profound gratitude!

As members of the Body of Christ, each of us is called to join in offering the gifts we have been given and to share the many blessings we have received. You are asked to make a commitment in the name of Jesus Christ as a sign that you are growing as a steward and as a person made in the image of a giving and generous God.

## **Stewardship Is a Journey...**

It is a conversion journey of receiving God's love and returning love to Him. Conversion requires prayer, reflection and time to allow God to show us how to grow into the people God created us to be—stewards united in one Body through Jesus Christ. Stewardship is transformative. Through the journey toward love we give new life to the Church.

## **Being Community Together...**

Community calls us to live for God and others. During our Parish Sacrificial Giving Program, we remind ourselves of how important it is that we offer to one another all that we can, so that we can grow in Christ as individuals and as a community.

## **What Do You Give Our Parish?**

Offer the gifts God has given you as your gift back to God! As a parish community we promise one another that we will gather our gifts in service of one another and those in our world who need to know God's love through us.

## **What Does Our Parish Give in Return?**

As a parish, we are a place in which to grow strong in faith through the Mass, the Sacraments and our Parish Ministries, caring for one another in all of the moments of our lives. We challenge one another to be formed in faith to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ through work and deed, continuing Jesus' ministry of service to all of God's people.



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**T**he starting point for parish Sacrificial Giving is the basic principle of Christian Stewardship—that everything we have is a gift from God. In gratitude for God’s generosity, we dedicate a portion of these gifts—time, talent and treasure—to further God’s Kingdom.

If we truly believe that God gives us all that we have, gratitude is one response. Trust is another. When we realize that God provides for us, we recognize that our real security lies in God. Our God, who has given us all, will take care of our lives.

## **Five Elements of Sacrificial Giving to Your Parish**

### ▪ **It’s Planned**

The decision to give is just that—a decision. It requires thought. And time. It must be integrated with other financial decisions in our lives as part of a careful, intentional response to God’s generosity. Planning helps to ensure that we give of the “first fruits”—that is, we put God’s priorities first, rather than giving some amount left over after other obligations are satisfied.

### ▪ **It’s Proportionate**

This is the “how much” question. Some people use the biblical concept of the tithe, a tenth (5% to Church and 5% to other charities) as a guide, but in general, the gift is proportionate to our resources, and commensurate to what God has given us. What is important is that we continue to strive to take a step toward planned and proportionate giving.

### ▪ **It’s a Sacrifice**

A gift becomes sacrificial when it comes from our substance rather than our abundance. Giving isn’t sacrificial if you don’t have to think about it or you don’t feel its impact. When we give out of substance,

we are changed in the process: We have given away something we thought we needed for ourselves, thus changing our lifestyle and reaffirming the belief that our security lies not in our material resources but in God. People who make sacrifices in gratitude to God find that He still provides for their needs.

### ▪ **It’s Given with a Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Our monetary gifts are most appropriately presented at the Offertory at Mass. The celebration of Christ’s sacrifice is a fitting context for our own sacrificial offering, which is a grateful response to the unfathomable love God has shown for us.

### ▪ **It’s a Gift ... from the Heart**

No gift is truly a gift unless it is given freely, without reservation or condition. The gifts of God are given to us in just such an unconditional manner, and we are called to model our giving after God’s. Sacrificial giving doesn’t buy happiness or love or a tenfold return on our investment. The motive for a sacrificial gift is not the expectation of getting something back. We give what we give because God has already given to us. Sacrificial giving is really a response, then, to the generosity of God. We acknowledge that we are not the starting point for the giving, but we are simply passing on a portion of what we have received.



*Experience  
the joy of giving  
from the heart.*

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**T**here are four ways of answering the call to stewardship. Each of the aspects of being a good steward—thanking, serving, inviting and giving—is important in deepening our relationship with God.

## **THANKING:**

### **Praising God Through Liturgical, Sacramental Preparation, and Prayer Ministry**

Did you know that each of us has an essential role in the Mass and sacramental celebrations? Coming together for prayer, especially the Eucharist, is the most important role we can fulfill in our lives. Liturgical Ministry helps us to put our relationship with God above all others, by ensuring that the liturgy will be celebrated well and with care.

## **INVITING:**

### **Welcoming and Renewing in Faith**

Imagine walking into someone's house and feeling unwelcomed. How important it is that we warmly welcome those who come to us as guests or new parishioners, as a sign of Christ's love, and of our joy that they are with us?

*“As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good Stewards of God’s varied grace.”*

(1 Peter 4:10)

## **SERVING:**

### **Within and Beyond Our Parish Community**

“See how they love one another.” That was said of the early Christian communities. When we serve within our parish, we recognize Christ's presence with and around us—and we are strengthened to serve others who need to know God's love.

## **GIVING:**

### **Offering Our Financial Resources to Further Our Parish's Mission**

We give in many ways: through active involvement in ministry, through prayer, and through financial giving. It is crucial that we challenge ourselves to step up our financial giving and ensure the continuation of our parish's mission and vision.



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Final in a Series of Reports on the Weekly Stewardship Responsibility

## Take a First Step ... Toward Planned, Proportionate and Sacrificial Giving

Think about how you might be able to make a positive difference in our parish community through the weekly collection. Start by making a conscious effort to examine your spending priorities, see where our parish is currently placed within them, then adjust your priorities as you deem necessary, based on our obligation to support the work of the Lord.

### Guidelines for Giving

- Find your annual income in the table (**below**), then find the amount you currently give weekly to the parish and see what percentage your current gift to the parish represents.
- Consider giving at the next level. For example, if you are presently giving 2% to the parish in the weekly collection, consider giving 3% or even 4% now.
- Consider setting your eventual goal at 10% (5% to the parish and 5% to other charities). Other charities might include Our Lady Queen of Martyrs School, the Annual Catholic Appeal or additional charities that are important to you. It may take a few years to get there, but it's a worthy and rewarding goal for all on the road to discipleship.

Weekly Giving to the Parish					Annual Income
1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	
\$4.81	\$9.62	\$14.42	\$19.23	\$24.04	\$25,000
\$5.77	\$11.54	\$17.31	\$23.08	\$28.85	\$30,000
\$6.73	\$13.46	\$20.19	\$26.92	\$33.65	\$35,000
\$7.69	\$15.38	\$23.08	\$30.77	\$38.46	\$40,000
\$9.62	\$19.23	\$28.85	\$38.46	\$48.08	\$50,000
\$11.54	\$23.08	\$34.62	\$46.15	\$57.69	\$60,000
\$13.46	\$26.92	\$40.38	\$53.85	\$67.31	\$70,000
\$15.38	\$30.77	\$46.15	\$61.54	\$76.92	\$80,000
\$17.31	\$34.62	\$51.92	\$69.23	\$86.54	\$90,000
\$19.23	\$38.46	\$57.69	\$76.92	\$96.15	\$100,000

As stewards, we are called to share our blessings according to our means. If we trust in God's love for us, we will experience the joy of giving from our hearts. So, please, prayerfully consider your weekly sacrifice to our parish. *May God bless you for your generosity.*